

REMARKSAction 1, 2

Proposed revised drawings are attached; numerals 49, 55 have been added to the unnumbered bars of the four-bar linkage, and the linkage is identified by numeral 25.

No new matter is added.

Specification Amendments

The specification has been amended above to include the new drawing numerals. No new matter is added. The specification has also been amended to correct the two typographical errors noted by the Examiner. Applicant thanks the Examiner for pointing these out.

Action 3, 4

Claim 1 has been amended to use "a" before "sliding door."

Claims 1-3 under Section 102(b) – Smith US 3,353,855

Claims 1-3 have been rejected as anticipated by Smith. Claim 1 recites "a housing locus" that the pull handle is "opposite." Claim 1 recites too that there is a "hand-operated lever rotatably mounted to said housing beyond said housing locus." The housing locus being opposite the pull handle and the lever being mounted beyond the housing locus means that the lever is beyond the pull handle. Compare the Applicant's drawings, Fig. 1. The Action compares Smith's lever 100 or 110 to Applicant's lever 46. But lever 46 is beyond the housing locus, and both the Smith levers 100, 110 are within

the housing locus (opposite the pull handle (handle bar 136)).

The dependent claims are patentable at least for reasons advanced with respect to claim 1.

The rejection of claims 1-3 as anticipated by Smith is respectfully traversed.

Action 7, 8 Claims 1-7 under Section 102(b) – Tucker US 3,177,687

Like Smith, Tucker fails to teach a lever beyond the housing locus (opposite the handle 50), as the Action concedes and as is confirmed by a consideration of Fig. 3 of Tucker's drawings. Note the location of lever 50 under the handle 18 in Tucker Fig. 3. Claim 1 recites the housing locus/beyond the locus features discussed above and these features are not taught by Tucker.

Claim 1 as discussed above has the lever beyond the housing locus and is not anticipated by and is patentable over Tucker. Dependent claims 2-7 are urged to be patentable over Tucker at least for reasons advanced in connection with claim 1.

Action 8, 9 under Section 103(a) – Tucker 3,177,687

The comments anent Tucker above are repeated here. It is further noted that Tucker does not have bars that extend from within the housing locus (opposite the handle bar) to beyond the housing locus. Indeed, the bars in Tucker are entirely within the housing

locus, opposite the handle bar. This is not a matter of merely a change in proportions, but a new result is realized;

With the invention, the problem of an inaccessible operating lever because of the formerly required close proximity of latch and lever is obviated. There is nothing in Tucker to suggest that the patentee contemplated this desirable result. Nor is there any suggestion in Tucker that the lengths of his bars are variable for any purpose. There is nothing in the present record to suggest any motivation for changing the bar lengths of Tucker, which it may be noted would require a thorough reengineering of the assembly shown by Tucker. Claims 8-12 are not obvious in view of Tucker.

Action 10 under Section 103(a) – Tucker 3,177,687 in view of Sperry US 3,413,025

Claim 10 recites the latch assembly to have a vertically disposed pull handle, a lever beyond the handle and the latch opposite the handle and a 4-bar coupling therebetween. Tucker has no such structure as noted above. Sperry teaches a latch assembly of spaced latches operated in concert via a linkage which has five bars, not four. Sperry lacks a vertically disposed pull handle opposite the latch housing and thus does not have the problem solved by the invention. Nor is there any point in spacing the lever and latch in Sperry to avoid interference by the handle location, since Sperry has but a small horizontal handle.

The Action suggests substituting the Sperry linkage for the Tucker linkage, but neither

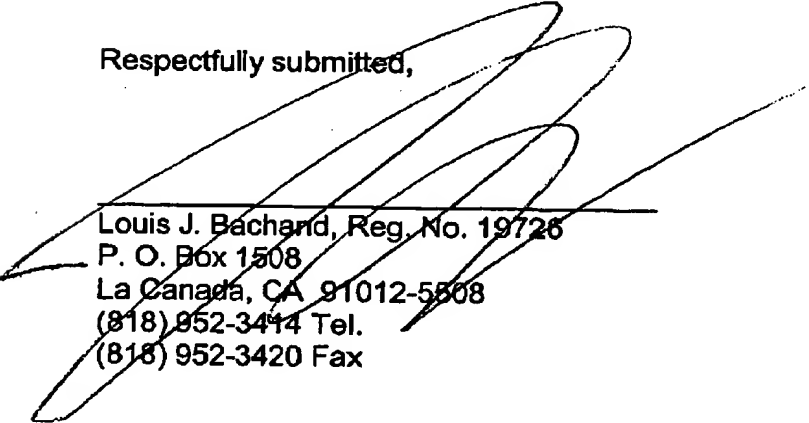
reference shows any motivation to do so.

The combination is suggested in the Action to result in a latch system having four (five) bars that extends from the latch housing to beyond the latch housing, but there is no such teaching in the combination. Rather it appears that the combination would have the entire linkage in the housing and not extending beyond the housing. After all, the linkage in Sperry is entirely within the housing locus (between the latches per se), and so is the linkage in the Tucker arrangement, all opposite the handle in the housing locus. So, there is no suggestion of Applicant's arrangement where the lever is beyond the handle (housing locus).

Conclusion

Reconsideration is requested; allowance of all claims is requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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